REMARKS

Claims 13-31 are currently pending in this application. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 28-31. The rejections of claims 13-27 are addressed below.

Claims 13, 15-20 and 24-26 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bernard et al. (U.S. 6,274,364 B1). The grounds of rejection set forth in the Office Action of March 9, 2004 have been maintained. Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection is rendered moot by the amendment of claims 13 and 24 in which the enzyme is now specified as being a calcium-independent transglutaminase.

Claims 14, 21-23 and 27 remain rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bernard et al. in view of McDevitt et al. (U.S. 6,051,033). The grounds of rejection were set forth by the Examiner in the Office Action of March 9, 2004. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

The Examiner indicates that "there is motivation to combine the references." Applicants respectfully disagree. The two references are not from analogous art. Bernard et al. relates to the desquamination of human skin. In contrast, however, McDevitt et al. is directed to the treatment of keratin fibers. Furthermore, McDevitt et al. pertains to the treatment of fibers (e.g. hair) that have

been **removed from their source host.** The conditions to which bulk fibers, i.e. those that have been separated from their host, and fibers that are still "growing" are subjected are quite different. There is no motivation from either reference that would suggest the combination of the two disclosures.

The Examiner has cited McDevitt et al. for the reason that the patentees equate calcium dependent and calcium-independent transglutaminases. While such a teaching is set forth, it pertains only to the treatment of bulk fibers that are used in, for example, clothing manufacturing. There is no suggestion or even inference that the teachings of McDevitt et al. would apply to the treatment of **growing** human hair.

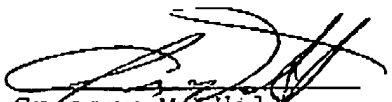
Further, with regard to the rejection of claim 24 et seq., the combined teachings of these two references clearly do not suggest a process for "setting" human hair. Neither reference deals with such a process.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments and remarks above, Applicants ask for reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims. Should any fees be due for entry and consideration of this Amendment that have not been

accounted for, the Commissioner is authorized to charge them to Deposit Account No. 01-1250.

Respectfully submitted,



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